

MANUFACTURER SOUPS UP OPERATIONS WITH CERTIFICATION

ABOUT RIDETECH. Ridetech specializes in performance suspension for automobiles. Based in Jasper, Indiana, Ridetech prides itself in having a common sense approach to giving customers what they want, when they want it. The company performs the vast majority of its manufacturing in-house, from research and development to final assembly. That way, Ridetech has complete control over every aspect of design, quality and delivery. With 40 employees, the company does the CAD drawings, prototyping, CNC machining, CNC tube bending, jig welding, shock assembly and dynoing, air-spring crimping and burst testing. All of Ridetech's tech/sales people have air suspension vehicles themselves, and the company has a fleet of vehicles that it uses to demonstrate the performance of its suspension products.

THE CHALLENGE. Ridetech viewed an ISO 9001:2008 Quality Management System as a competitive advantage that would help broaden their customer base, increase internal efficiencies, improve customer satisfaction, and allow for internal auditing. After consulting with Purdue MEP, part of the MEP National Network™, Ridetech decided it was time to pursue ISO 9001:2008 certification.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Purdue MEP provided Ridetech with ISO 9001:2008 training that allowed the company to quickly obtain certification with limited cost and minimal impact on the company's daily operations. "Our experience using Purdue resources was excellent," said Johnny Merder, Operations Manager for RideTech. "They enlisted the help of an ISO expert that helped us get to the point where we were comfortable in self auditing." Purdue also helped Ridetech secure funding assistance for the ISO training through a state grant.

As part of the implementation process, Ridetech developed well-defined and documented processes and procedures to improve the consistency of production. The new procedures are easier for new employees to follow, reducing on-boarding costs. The company also reduced non-value added activities and implemented procedures ensure corrective action is taken whenever defects occur. Now, defects are caught earlier and are corrected at a lower cost. In addition, the certification allow the company to keep and gain further OEM-type customers and is noticing improved customer satisfaction, an increase in market share, and increasing sales and revenues.

"Purdue went above and beyond to make sure we had all the tools necessary to meet our goals. The level of professionalism was exceptional; we weren't expecting that kind of service from a grant."

-Johnny Merder, Operations Manager

RESULTS



Increased sales by over
\$500,000



Achieved ISO 9001:2008
certification in less time than
expected



Retained and attracted new
OEM-type customers



SEF state grant funding of
\$16,000 for ISO
implementation

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